and approved for Rs. 23.73 crores and Rs. 86.91 crores respectively. In addition, Annual Work Plans for the six DPEP districts were approved for Rs. 49.55 crores and Rs. 30.21 crores during 2001-02 and 2002-03 respectively.

(c) 1:40 (One teacher for every forty pupils).

(d) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is an additionality *i.e.*, over and above the expenditure already incurred by the States/Union Territories in 1999-2000 immediately prior to the launching of the Abhiyan. Hence only the salary and expenses of additional teachers required to maintain the Teacher-Student ratio at the level of 1:40 will be borne by the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA).

Revival of IISCO

*177. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) what is the present stage of the revival package plan for sustaining the operations at the Burnpur-based steel plant of IISCO; and

(b) what is the present state of the affairs of this steel plant?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORE TRIPATHY): (a) A rehabilitation proposal for Indian Iron and Steel Company Limited (IISCO) is currently under examination of Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI), the Operating Agency (OA) of Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR).

(b) Burnpur Works of IISCO is not in a good condition due to technological obsolescence, ageing of plant and equipment, outmoded technology and lack of necessary capital inputs etc. Its saleable steel production has come down to 302 thousand tonnes per annum in 2001-02 as compared to 387 thousand tonnes per annum in 1991-92 and its accumulated losses as on 30.9.2002 are Rs. 897.48 crore.

Rolling back of fertilizer's prices

†*178. SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI:
SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering to roll back the increased prices of fertilizers;

(b) if so, by when a final decision would be taken in this regard;

†Orignal notice of the question received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government had asked the Commission on Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) for lowering of fertilizer prices, to the level prevailing at the beginning of this year and for relief on the interest payments on farmers' loans;

(d) if so, the details of recommendations made by CACP; and

(e) the decision taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (e) In view of the failure of monsoons during June-July, 2002, the Government asked the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) to recommend measures to help the farmers and mitigate their hardship. While other proposals submitted by the CACP are under consideration, the Government has already announced payment of Special Drought Relief Prices ranging from Rs. 5 to Rs. 20 per quintal for different Kharif crops of 2002-03 season.

Private Participation in Agriculture Sector

*179. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that private participation in agricultural extension is vital for development of agriculture in the country;

(b) whether any study has been carried out by the Ministry with regard to providing extension services and the willingness to pay for the services; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir. The private participation in agricultural extension is important as it will help complement and supplement the public extension system which has weakened in several States as a result of financial constraints being experienced by them.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Details are annexed as Statement.

Statement

Details of the Study on Private Participation in Agriculture Sector

The acceptability of a network of Agri-Clinics and Agri-Business Centres was assessed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) through a quick survey entrusted to Agricultural Universities located in Pantnagar (Uttaranchal), Pusa (Bihar) and Akola (Maharashtra) and National Academy of Agricultural Research Management, Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh). The survey covered both, farmers, who would be the clients, and agricultural graduates,